



## STaR Childcare Support Program

The STaR Childcare Support Program (STaR Program) is modelled on a successful early intervention program that was developed by Dr Coral Kemp and her team at Macquarie University Special Education Centre (MUSEC) over a 12 year period. It was then trialled as a pilot project within community childcare centres for five years.

The research-based program provides training for childcare staff in participating inclusive childcare centres to assist them to support and include children aged 0-5 years who have disabilities or developmental delays. Staff are trained and supported in developing and implementing appropriate programs and activities within the everyday routines of the childcare centre (The STaR Child Support Model). This training and support is provided by highly qualified early intervention staff linked to Macquarie University. Parents/carers are thereby given increased life opportunities or work choices with the knowledge that their child is receiving an appropriate educational program.

### What does the STaR Model offer?

The STaR Model

- supports families to find appropriate inclusive childcare placement for their child with disabilities/developmental delay;
- supports children with disabilities to achieve optimal development in inclusive early childhood settings;
- trains and supports childcare centre staff in developing and implementing appropriate individualised programs and activities for children with disabilities/developmental delays, based on ongoing assessment of the child's current functioning within the childcare centre across all areas of development as well as the goals of therapists and the family's priorities;
- supports the families of children with disabilities/developmental delays through the provision of, formal and informal parent discussions/education, respite, and the opportunity to confidently leave their child in childcare knowing that his/her additional needs are catered for;
- collaborates with other early intervention services that the child is receiving and implements appropriate objectives within the daily routines and activities of the centre; and
- prepares children with disabilities and their families for the child's transition to school.

In addition the STaR Association may provide opportunities to participate in Preparation for School and Transition to School programs in the year prior to school.

### Where does the STaR Model operate?

The STaR Model operates in participating childcare centres across the Sydney metropolitan area.

### Criteria for entry to the STaR Childcare Support Program

Children can be referred to the STaR Program if the child is 0-5 years old with a documented disability/developmental delay.

Children will then be selected for the program based on

- the centre's ability to cater for the child's individual needs,
- the level of support required, and
- the mix of disabilities within the group at that centre.

Parents and families of children enrolled in the STaR Program need to

- supply documentation required for funding purposes;
- sign permission for an application for Intervention Support Program (ISP) funding;
- sign the parental agreement;
- pay the childcare fees applicable for their child's enrolment at the childcare centre; and
- pay a minimal fee on acceptance of an offer of placement in the Program.

The STaR Childcare Support Program is funded federally by The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) with a contribution from the Intervention Support Program administered by the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET).

### For more information contact

Dawn Chadwick  
Educational Programs Manager  
Special Education Centre  
Macquarie University NSW 2109

Ph: 02 9850 8700  
Fax: 02 9850 8254  
Email: dawn@star.org.au